

The Philosopher

CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP IN THE NEW ERA

In this time of national reconstruction, this new era which is just beginning, in which even the most unthinking cannot but be aware that great changes have begun to work themselves out, the duty of every Canadian man and woman to be worthy of the responsibilities of Canadian citizenship is a duty of greater urgency than it ever was before in our country's history. The whole world has been changed by the War, which has ended the lives of seven million men, and brought suffering and anguish to hundreds of millions of persons, and made profound alterations in the whole structure of human society and in the lives of the nations and in international relationships. Now, as never before, every thinking Canadian must realize that he, or she, belongs not only to a family, but to a society and a nation, and must cultivate the virtue of patriotism in all its widening circles. We must train ourselves to take an interest in public affairs, local and national, and not to consider that they are merely the business of party politicians and wire-pullers and the battle-ground of contending factions. Civic duty begins in the life of the family. From this it expands through the widening circles of self-governing democracy. A good citizen must begin by discharging the duties which are nearest to him, but he must not neglect those which lie outside, or become so absorbed in his own private interests as to neglect those of the community and of the nation.

TEACHING CANADIANISM

The place where true Canadianism should be taught is in the schools. It should be taught in the home, as well, but there are thousands of homes in Canada in which only the children are Canadian-born. It is the presence in great numbers of such homes that makes it doubly a matter of vital necessity that there should be schools for all the children in Canada, and that all the children should attend school, and that they should all be taught true Canadianism at school. Only thus will it be possible to provide for the years to come a safeguard of intelligence and patriotism against evil doctrines which, working upon uneducated minds, can only result in disaster to our country. Let the principles of true Canadianism be implanted in the receptive minds of all the children in Canada, and they will grow up with right ideas of conduct and of their duty to their country and their fellow-countrymen, as well as to themselves. Every true Canadian man and woman should regard it as his, or her, duty, to take an active interest in public education and in making the schools as efficient as possible for their work of making good, intelligent, patriotic Canadians out of the boys and girls who will be the men and women of to-morrow.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

A certain wealthy man in Winnipeg, whose own educational advantages were limited, and who is seeing to it that his son shall have all the advantages which fortune denied to himself, was discussing recently the whole subject of education, both the kind furnished by life and the kind afforded by schools and universities. In reply to a remark about how different his life might have been if he had had the advantages his son is having, he said, "Well, I didn't have his advantages, and can't have them now—and at the same time he can't have my disadvantages!" True it is that disadvantages may furnish very valuable education. One man learns the value of truth by going to Sunday school; another by doing business with liars. One man is sober because he had a good mother; another because his father drank himself into the gutter. But surely in every case where headway has been made against obstacles and deprivations, there would have been better progress if instead of educational hindrances, there had been educational helps. But they must be educational helps of the right kind, and given at the right time, and that is what makes the problem of education, and how best to adapt it to individual needs.

THE SAFEGUARD OF FREEDOM AND ORDER

From public discussion comes public opinion. And from public opinion comes public action. Public discussion is the first insurance against revolution. Freedom of public discussion may be prevented in many ways. Under the old autocratic rule in Russia the way was to censor the press and prohibit public meetings, and it seems that these methods are still being used in Russia with a severity as extreme as in the old days when the Czar was the nominal head of the state. The German way was to suborn the men who should have been the natural leaders of thought by means of honors and decorations and promotions, and to drug public opinion by Kultur and by vainglorious talk about Germany's destiny

being to dominate the whole world. Only in the lands where discussion is free is there true liberty, with freedom from the danger of revolution. Therein lies Canada's safeguard against such peril. What happens in a revolution is the breakdown of the social habits of a people. It is not merely government that goes by the board in a revolution, but also domestic habits, religious habits, industrial habits, and, in fact, all the continuance of habit out of which our civilization is woven. Savagery and brutalities ensue; and terrorism has often been the prelude to a dictatorship. Only in lands where there have been such conditions as France had before the Revolution of a century and a quarter ago, and as Russia had before the revolution which destroyed the Czarism, and where discussion is not free, can there be revolution. The forces of revolution are incapable of building, they only destroy.

THE HIGH COST OF DRESSING

Men and women who have been wearing their old suits for years, in the hope of being able after the war was ended to buy new ones at prices lower than the war prices have so far been disappointed. Prices of clothing and of the materials for clothing are not only showing a staying power worthy of a better cause; they are showing a climbing power. With the average person the purchase of a suit of clothes, or a dress, is a much more perplexing problem than ever it was before. Several months ago the Cost of Living Commissioner announced at Ottawa his belief that the middlemen were to blame. After that the Cost of Living Committee of Parliament made some investigations which threw light on the problem, showing that there were more than the middleman to be blamed. Which is all highly interesting, no doubt. But it has not served to bring down the prices.

FARMERS ARE MANUFACTURERS

The writer of a letter printed in The London Times makes the point that "the earth and the fulness thereof, the birds of the air and the beasts of the field were not bestowed upon mankind in the state in which they are found to-day," and adds: "The land of England, and, for the matter of that, all productive land, is a manufactured article, as much so as the clothes we wear." Not quite as much so, perhaps. Still there is a measure of truth in what the writer of that letter in The Times says. The expenditure of labor and of money involved in bringing new land into production varies greatly, of course, according to the character of the land and the work done, but in no case is it an inconsiderable expenditure. As for the grains, the vegetables, the fruits and the animals with which agricultural industry concerns itself, their breeding and development have cost and are still costing great expenditures of work, thought and money. It seems paradoxical, in view of the terminology of current economical and political discussion, to think of farmers and manufacturers as being in the same category. But both take certain "materials," and by means of labor and machinery work them up into "finished products." At least, the farmer's products are his "finished products," though they may be the raw materials of other industries—the mill, the creamery and the packing plant. So are many of the products of many manufacturers (for example, leather, iron, steel and paper), the raw material used by many other manufacturers. The problem of shaping national fiscal policy is mainly a problem of bringing the just claims of all classes into right adjustment.

LIGHT ON WORLD PROBLEMS

The Philosopher has been reading the latest book from the pen of that grand old man, James Bryce, or to give him the title which now disguises him, Viscount Bryce. Famous as statesman and historian, his personal influence is as great in the United States as it is throughout the British Empire. As British Ambassador at Washington he was eminent in winning and holding the respect and confidence of the American people. No man could have been better chosen by Lloyd George to head the Commission which made the historic report on the German atrocities in Belgium and France. In the book open before The Philosopher, as these lines are written, "Essays and Addresses in War Time," there are many wise and enlightening utterances. There are few men living whose utterances on the great world problems carry greater weight than those of James Bryce. Especially notable is what he has to say on nationalism. Seventy years ago, he reminds us, many an active and sanguine mind in Europe and America was aflame with what then began to be called the spirit of nationality. But writing with the broad wisdom and the shrewdness and experience of the practical statesman, he shows that the hopes

thus founded proved difficult to realize. The new principle did not accomplish what was expected. In fact, its application led to many difficulties and dangers, until in the present century we have seen the overweening nationalism of Germany become the chief source of the most devastating war in all history, for which the immediate pretext was furnished by Austria's desire to crush the nationality of Serbia. How then is the world to be protected against similar wars in the future? By the League of Nations, says Viscount Bryce. He admits the difficulties in the way of the perfect realization of that solution, but he feels that it is the only solution and the only guarantee of the future peace of the world.

WIFE-MADE MEN

We hear much about self-made men. We do not hear enough about wife-made men. There are many of them, in all walks of life. Often in cases where there seems the least reason for thinking that a man's success is not due entirely to himself the truth is that it is mainly due to his wife—to the inspiration she has given him, to the self-confidence she has stimulated by her belief in him, and to the wise urgings by which she has directed his efforts. How many a man, whose courage and determination have begun to fail him in the face of increasing adversities, has gained new courage and new determination from his wife! Many of the world's greatest men have acknowledged that they owed more to their wives than to themselves; and in the humblest spheres, no less than in the highest, it is true that to many a man's wife is due the main share of the credit for his making a success of his life.

THERE ARE MANY KINDS OF GOLD BRICKS

A few months ago The Philosopher took occasion to say something of the operations of share-selling swindlers in the northwestern States, who were planning to extend their campaigning on this side of the international line. In city and country alike these swindlers find their prey. Many a business man who enjoys the reputation of being shrewd and careful is apparently unable to exercise either shrewdness or carefulness, or ordinary common sense, when a glib and plausible talker puts a "get-rich-quick" proposition before him. The salesmen who are out to sell shares in mythical enterprises from which fabulous profits are promised (the shares to be bought back again at a large advance, if the purchaser is not satisfied after a year has passed), are trained to study individual cases, and to use the methods best suited for each. For a certain kind of "sucker" it is recommended that after the right amount of talking, efforts should be made to get him excited, so that he will act on impulse. Some of these psychologists in swindling, after one or two interviews drive up in a great hurry and without getting out of their automobiles, make their prospective victims come out and talk to them. The moment a sale is consummated, the salesman is off before the purchaser has time to think it over. Strange how many of us there are who want to get something for nothing and by taking what we conceive to be a gambler's chance to evade the necessity of having to work for what we get! With not a few it does not seem to matter how indignant they can be about the world's injustices and the ill-gotten gains of the rich. When they think they see a chance for an "investment" that will give them easy money in large quantities, they waste no time in grasping at it. They will pay good money and Victory bonds for shares on which the smooth-talking salesmen promise returns as high as 1,000 per cent, and later on, when they realize that they have been swindled they are slow to realize that it is they themselves that are to blame.

A THOUGHT FOR THE TIMES

We are living in a time in which those of a naturally conservative disposition of mind must find much to cause them disquiet. Of course the moderate prudence of the wise man who will not too lightly trust himself beyond the teachings of experience may be intensified to such a degree of caution as to become a bar to progress. Progress requires a certain readiness to go forward and try experiments. Yet if that readiness is reckless and unbridled disaster is certain. Wisdom is not so anxious for progress as to be eager for novelties; nor so afraid of ideas and proposals because they are new as to be content without progress. This is an indispensable condition of the security and efficiency of progress in all regions of human activity. It is as necessary in Parliament as it is in an automobile. In both a brake is essential to safety. Which it is as well to keep in mind.